

**REMARKS**

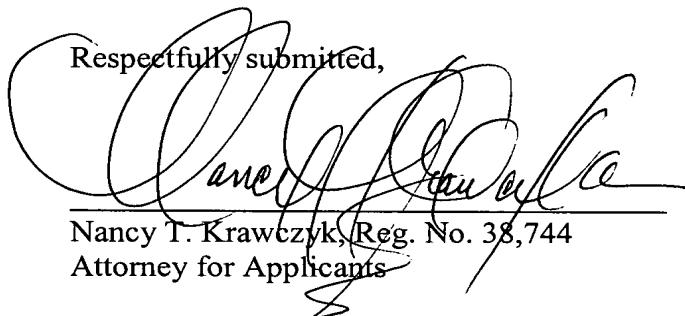
The pending claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the state of the art exemplified by Boileau (3,830,273), Gerard et al. (5,421,390), Gerard et al (5,645,658), Hammond et al (5,685,927), and European Patent Application 0 465 786 A1, in view of Palmer (1,293,528), Murray (2,691,335), French Patent 607.026, and Japanese Patent Application 5-229303 A taken with Japanese Patent Application 5-229302A.

In the most recent Office Action, it is held that the term "separately manufactured" in the assembly claim does not exclude the ring being bonded to the underlying groove surface. Applicants claim language has been clarified to indicate that the invention is an assembly of a separately manufactured cured tire and a separately manufactured ring that is placed in a groove of the cured tire. The two elements are not irreversibly secured to one another as with any of the structures proposed by the rejection.

An assembly of two separately manufactured and cured elements as recited is not anticipated or obvious over any of the cited prior art, as recognized in paragraph 7 of the recent Office Action.

In light of this amendment, all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application are allowable. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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